



Forget ME Not



A Newsletter of the Maine Alzheimer's Project

Spring/
Summer 2003

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Inside

Annual Geriatric
Conference, 2

Grants Available, 3

Educational
Material, 4

Alzheimer's
Website, 4

Updated Senior
Housing Guide, 5

SHIP Program, 5

Best Friends™
Training, 6

Calendar, 7

Preventive
Services, 8

Without Care: Maine's Direct Care Worker Shortage

by Lisa Pohlmann, Maine Center for Economic Policy

Report Highlights

Who are direct care workers and what do they provide?

- These paraprofessional workers in Maine's long term care system include certified nursing assistants (CNAs), personal care attendants (PCAs), and home health aides who work in nursing facilities, residential and assisted living facilities and home care.
- Together they provide eight out of ten hours of paid care received by elders and people with disabilities needing long term care.
- Their services range from feeding, bathing, dressing, administering medications, and rehabilitation, to helping people with in-home daily living tasks. They provide emotional support, companionship, and a lifeline to the outside world for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Workers struggle because of low wages, difficult working conditions, and staff shortages.

- Over one-third of direct care workers are single parents.
- Over half of CNAs and two thirds of PCAs have household incomes less than \$20,000. The average annual income for a PCA in 2001 (\$17,480) was 133% of the federal poverty level for a family of three (\$14,630), and was only 60% of a basic needs budget in Maine for a family of three in 2001 (\$29,018).
- Many are not offered health insurance by their employer or are not able to afford the co-pays of the employer's health insurance plan. Most home care workers do not have guaranteed hours and thus, do not receive health insurance or paid time off.
- Many rely on public assistance to "get by" because of low income. CNAs working in home health agencies and nursing homes are twice as likely to receive public benefits, specifically food stamps and Medicaid, than workers in other job categories.
- With an average hourly wage of \$8.69 for all direct care workers in 2001, many workers are leaving the field, able to find far safer, less physically and emotionally demanding, and potentially more stable work at similar or higher pay in other sectors.

—continued on page 3

13th Annual Rural Geriatric Conference

Evidence-Based Practice in Geriatrics

Holiday Inn, Bar Harbor, Maine

June 5, 6, 7, 2003

Who Should Attend

Physicians, physician assistants, nurses, nursing facility administrators, certified nursing assistants, psychologists, social workers, mental health practitioners, occupational and physical therapists, substance abuse counselors, and other health care providers.

Conference Overview

Day I — Thursday, June 5

Evidence-based practice in health care, the theme of this year's conference, is defined as "reliance on formal, systematic analysis and synthesis of the research literature to determine clinical effectiveness." The opening presentation will expand on this definition and set the tone for subsequent presentations on best practice approaches in Alzheimer's disease and new treatments for osteoporosis.

Day II — Friday, June 6

Friday starts with an overview of Governor Baldacci's Health Care Initiative, followed by a look at issues, reasons, and possible solutions to Maine's direct care worker shortage, and an overview of critical access hospital care as an integral part of the continuum of care.

Day III — Saturday, June 7 (two 3 1/2-hour concurrent tracks)

Registration Information

- (all 3 days) Thursday, Friday, Saturday, June 5-7 — \$259
- (one day only) Thursday, June 5 only — \$109
- (one day only) Friday, June 6 only — \$109
- Saturday, June 7 only — \$64

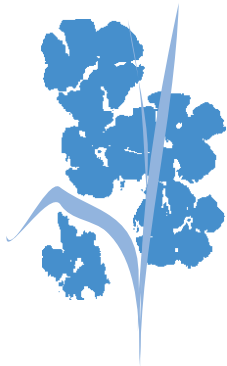
Registration Questions:

Sue-ann Sanford (207) 622-7566 x232 or ssanford@mcd.org

Laurie Fowler (207) 622-7566 x202 or laurief@mcd.org

Conference Content Questions: Bo Yerxa at (207) 623-5744

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WORKER SHORTAGE

continued from page 1

- The 2000 occupational injury rate for these workers in Maine (at 6.9 incidences per 100 workers) is over twice as high as the rate for all occupations (at 3.0 incidences per 100 workers).
- While most direct care workers report liking their work with clients, they do not like the lack of career advancement opportunities, inadequate supervision and support, and the stress of staff shortages that compromise their ability to offer quality care. These important factors are also driving workers away from direct care.

Key recommendations of the report include:

- Coordinate state efforts to address the worker shortage through establishment of a direct care workforce committee.
- Increase public funding to enable employers to provide livable wages, and ensure benefits for all direct care workers.
- Develop a coordinated training system, career pathways and workplace culture changes.

Special thanks to the funders who supported this important document: the Ford Foundation, the Frances Hollis Brain Foundation and the Bingham Program.

The Maine Center for Economic Policy is an independent, nonpartisan research organization with the mission to advance public policy solutions to achieve a prosperous, fair and sustainable economy.

(The full report is available at www.mecp.org)

Grants Available for Dementia Day Programs

The Brookdale Foundation Group has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the start-up of social model group respite programs for people with Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers.

In November 2003, the Foundation will be awarding up to 15 seed grants of \$7,500 for new, dementia-specific group respite programs. Any 501(c)(3) or equivalent not-for-profit health or social service agency wishing to develop a social model, day program for Alzheimer's families is invited to apply.

Applications should be based on *How to Start and Manage a Group Activities and Respite Program for People with Alzheimer's and Their Families*, a manual for community-based organizations — available free of charge from The Brookdale Foundation.

Proposals are due at The Brookdale Foundation offices in New York by Thursday, July 10, 2003. Award announcements will be made in September.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the RFP for the 2003 Brookdale National Group Respite Program Grant initiative or would like a free copy of *How to Start and Manage a Group Activities and Respite Program for People with Alzheimer's and Their Families*, please contact Evelyn Yuen, TA Resources Manager, Brookdale National Group Respite Program, 2320 Channing Way, Berkley, CA 94704, phone (510) 540-6734, fax (510) 540-6771, email bngrp@best.com.

Copies of the Request for Proposal are also available from the Maine Alzheimer's Project, call (207) 287-9214.



Alzheimer's Educational Material To Be Available Locally

More than 125 libraries in Maine, as well as rural health centers and area agencies on aging, will receive a special collection of educational materials about Alzheimer's disease this month from the Maine Alzheimer's Association. These materials will be distributed at special events beginning in Presque Isle on April 29th and in Bangor, Waterville, and South Portland during the month of May.

"Caregivers have always been able to get information from us simply by calling 1-800-660-2371," says Eleanor Goldberg, Executive Director of the Maine Alzheimer's Association. "Now they will have access to many of the latest and best books and videos about Alzheimer's right in their own community."

These materials are made available through a \$90,000 grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation, the state's largest private health care funder. Instrumental in identifying sites in each county were the Maine State Library, and three advisory groups comprised of health care professionals, librarians and caregivers from across the state. This special collection covers a wide range of topics including facts about Alzheimer's disease, caregiving tips, and first person accounts of how others deal with the disease.

For a complete list of materials and the sites where these new resources are housed, call Peg Gagnon, Information and Outreach Specialist for the Maine Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-660-2871 or visit their website, www.mainealz.org.

Updated Alzheimer's Resource

The Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center of the National Institute on Aging announces the launch of their newly updated and redesigned web site, www.alzheimers.org.

The Institute encourages exploration of the new site, which features a fresh look, improved navigation, quick access to often-requested information, and an online shopping cart to make it easy to view and order publications.

Along with the new features and format, standard services continue to be available: AD clinical trials database, the Comprehensive Health Information Database (for literature searches), directory of Alzheimer's Disease Centers, and conference calendar.

Emails are welcome with any comments, questions, or problems, and should be addressed to: adear@alzheimers.org. The new web site is another service of the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Serving the Memory-Impaired Resident in Senior Housing

Updated Senior Housing Guidebook Available

Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia affects at least four million Americans. The incidence of Alzheimer's disease rises with advancing age, affecting nearly 1 in 10 people over 65 and nearly 50 percent of those over 85. As residents of senior housing developments age in place and some exhibit signs of dementia, they require special services and approaches in order to function successfully within the terms of their lease agreements.

This guidebook, funded in part through a grant from the Maine Alzheimer's Project, was written for, and in collaboration with, the senior housing provider community including developers, owners, managers, resident service providers, maintenance staff and community service organizations. More than 160 pages long, the book is packed with factual information, practical tips, and ready-to-use tools.

To order a copy of *Serving the Memory-Impaired Resident in Senior Housing* please call 1-800-660-2871.

Chapter headings include:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Guidelines for Communication
- Dealing with Challenging Behaviors
- Safety Issues and Tips
- Dealing with the Situation
- Involving the Police and Adult Protective
- Legal and Financial Issues
- Creating a More Dementia-Friendly Environment
- Community Resources

The SHIP Program

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program

Get answers!

All over Maine there are Health Insurance Counselors (specially trained staff and volunteers) to help you with health insurance questions and getting the health care you need. They can tell you about programs that help lower the cost of prescription drugs and other out-of-pocket medical expenses.

Get free information and advice. SHIP can help you:

- Understand Medicare statements and other forms
- Compare supplemental policies and plans
- Reduce out-of-pocket medical expenses
- Learn your rights and options
- Learn how to detect and report errors, abuse and fraud



Call: 1-877-353-3771 (local area agency on aging) or 1-800-750-5353 (Legal Services for the Elderly). The goal of SHIP is to provide education and help people with health insurance decisions. Health Insurance Counselors do not sell insurance or recommend policies.

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program is sponsored by the Bureau of Elder and Adult Services through a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Best Friends™ Training Initiative Update

Susan Wehry, MD, a Geriatric Psychiatrist at University of Vermont Medical School and consultant to the State of Vermont, recently spent two days in Maine providing training to those involved with the Best Friends™ Approach to Alzheimer's Training Initiative. On the first day, master trainers convened for a small and interactive training designed to expand their knowledge the 5 D's: delirium, delusional disorders, dementia, depression, and drugs. This in-depth look at these disorders was provided so that trainers would be able to teach others to recognize the 5 D's.

On day two, Best Friends™ liaisons, from facilities that have received the training, were offered a similar curriculum on the 5 D's by Dr. Wehry. During the afternoon, a panel of Best Friends™ liaisons offered insights on how they implement the approach, discussed some of the challenges they face, and how they address them. Participants agreed that the two days were worthwhile and that more opportunities to share ideas and experiences would be valuable. Watch for more events in the future.



Best Friends™ Training

Upcoming Best Friends™ Training sites include:

Elder Independence of Maine, Augusta	May 13
Thornton Hall, Brunswick	May 28 and June 11
Glendridge & Maine Alzheimer's Care Center	May 28
Presque Isle Nursing Home and Caribou Nursing Home	June 11 and 25
Presque Isle Nursing Home and Caribou Nursing Home	October 1 and 22

For additional information regarding the dates and sites for training, please contact Jan Halloran at 287-9233.

Calendar of Events

May

■ **May 15: *Making Every Moment Count, Annual Statewide Conference*** 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM at the Spectacular Event Center, **Bangor**. COST: \$30 for family caregivers (\$25 for members of the Maine Alzheimer's Association) and \$55 for professionals (\$50 for members). Registration fees include lunch and CEUs/Contact Hours for professionals. Scholarships are available. FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **May 16: *Memory, Aging and Alzheimer's Disease***, presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM. **Millinocket Public Library**. NO CHARGE. FMI: 1-800-660-2871

■ **May 16: Alzheimer's Training for Healthcare Professionals**. In-service for area healthcare providers presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 12:00 Noon – 2:00 PM. **Millinocket Regional Hospital**. Certificates of attendance are available. NO CHARGE. FMI: call Hope Boyd at 723-5161.

■ **May 17 (Saturday): *Living with Alzheimer's Disease: A Workshop for Family Caregivers***. Family conference presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM. **Millinocket Regional Hospital**. NO CHARGE. To register and FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **May 20: *Taking Care of You While You Take Care of a Loved One***. A day of rest, information, and appreciation for family and friends caring for seniors. 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. NO CHARGE. A light breakfast and lunch included. Holiday Inn Express, 352 North St., **Saco**. To register or FMI: call the Southern Maine Agency on Aging's Vivien Eisenhart at 1-800-427-7411, ext. 256 or Lori Campbell ext. 266.

■ **May 23: Caregiver's Conference**. The conference will be held at the Chan Center at Cary Medical Center, **Caribou** and begins with registration at 8:30 AM. Caregivers attend at NO COST. There will be a nominal fee for professionals. For more information contact Sharon Berz, Aroostook Area Agency on Aging at 764-3396 or Nita Mosher, Cary Medical Center at 498-3111. Pre-registration is required.

■ **May 29: *Memory, Aging and Alzheimer's Disease***, presented by Lucie Arbuthnot and Leigh Sherrill, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM. Location: Medomak High School, **Waldoboro**. COST: \$5. FMI: call Rosemary Brown at Waldoboro Adult Education, 832-5205

June

■ **June 5 - 7 (Thursday-Saturday): 13th Annual Rural Geriatric Conference — *Evidence-Based Practice in Geriatrics***. Holiday Inn, **Bar Harbor**. Registration questions contact Sue-ann Sanford at 622-7566 ext. 232 or ssanford@mcd.org or Laurie Fowler 622-7566 ext. 202 or laurief@mcd.org. For conference content questions contact Bo Yerxa at 623-5744.

■ **June 6: *Memory, Aging and Alzheimer's Disease***, presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM. **Lubec Public Library**. NO CHARGE. FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **June 7 (Saturday): *Family Caregivers — A Day of Celebration, Relaxation & Fun***. 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Senior Spectrum's Cohen Community Center, Town Farm Road, **Hallowell**. NO CHARGE to all family caregivers. FMI: contact Senior Spectrum at 1-800-639-1533.

■ **June 7 (Saturday): *Living with Alzheimer's Disease: A Workshop for Family Caregivers***, presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. **Lubec Public Library**, 10:15 AM - 3:00 PM. NO CHARGE. To register and FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **June 13: Annual Family Caregiver Celebration**, presented by Eastern Agency on Aging. 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Lucerne Inn, **Dedham**. NO CHARGE. FMI: call Michaela McCarthy at 1-800-432-7812, ext. 131.

■ **June 19: *Alzheimer's 101: Understanding the Basic Elements of Good Care***, presented by Liz Weaver, Maine Alzheimer's Association. This workshop is for staff, in any setting, who provide care to people with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM. Chapter Office, 163 Lancaster Street, **Portland**. Cost: \$20 (members), \$25 (non-members). FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **June 20: *Memory, Aging and Alzheimer's Disease***, presented by Lucie Arbuthnot, Maine Alzheimer's Association. 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM. Turner Public Library, **Presque Isle**. NO CHARGE. FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

■ **June 21 (Saturday): *Living with Alzheimer's Disease: A Workshop for Family Caregivers***. **Presque Isle** (Location TBA). 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM. NO CHARGE. To register and FMI: 1-800-660-2871.

Medicare Preventive Services

There are steps you can take to lower your risk of disease and illness. Medicare pays for some preventive services to help you stay healthy.

Covered services include:

- Tests for breast cancer, cervical cancer, vaginal cancer, and colorectal cancer
- Bone mass measurements
- Diabetes monitoring and self-management
- Glaucoma screening
- Flu, pneumonia, and Hepatitis B shots
- Prostate cancer screening tests

Talk to your doctor about your risk for getting these health problems. Your local area agency on aging can give you more detail about preventive services covered by Medicare. Call 1-877-353-3771.

Please note: If you want to be taken off our mailing list or would like to add someone, please contact Arta Haxha at 780-5073, email: ahaxha@usm.maine.edu or Mark Richards at 780-4527 email: markr@usm.maine.edu

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SAVE THE DATES: June 5 - 7, 2003 *The Annual Geriatric Conference, Bar Harbor*